

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: JUNE 6, 1997**

CONTACT: Michael Rivo, Deputy City Attorney, Consumer & Environmental Protection, 533-5500; or Lauri Twomey, Director of Media Relations, Bus: 235-5725; Pager: 232-2237, #6273; Fax: 236-7215; Res: 549-3437; Res Fax: 549-3443

**NATIONAL CHAIN PAYS \$58,067 TO SETTLE SCANNER OVERCHARGE ALLEGATIONS**

Drug Emporium, a national drug store chain with three stores in San Diego County, paid \$58,067 in civil penalties and other monetary relief to settle a consumer protection lawsuit filed today by the San Diego City Attorney's Office.

The San Diego Superior Court lawsuit alleged that Drug Emporium engaged in unfair competition and misleading advertising by charging customers more for items than the advertised or posted price.

Between August 1995 and January 1997, Weights and Measures officials in San Diego and three other California counties conducted checkout scanner inspections at ten Drug Emporium stores. The inspections revealed pricing overcharges on a number of the test purchases.

San Diego City Attorney Casey Gwinn praised Weights and Measures officials in San Diego and throughout California for their efforts in protecting consumers from being overcharged at retail stores.

Under the terms of the Superior Court judgment, Drug Emporium is prohibited from charging customers higher prices than those posted or advertised. The settlement was reached without the company admitting any wrongdoing.

# # #